

The Camden Journal.

VOLUME 29.

CAMDEN, SOUTH-CAROLINA, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 28, 1869.

NUMBER 11.

SELECTED STORY.

A BOLD STROKE FOR A WIFE.

BY JUDGE CLARK.

It was my first visit North since I had taken up my abode and entered on the practice of my profession in New Orleans.

In the city of New York I had a very dear friend, my old chum and classmate, George Dickson; and as he was the only person I knew in the great metropolis, of course I lost no time in looking him up.

Three years had passed since our last meeting, but ten could scarcely have produced a change more marked than had taken place in the appearance and manner of my friend.

Our first greetings and friendly inquiries over, I longed, yet forbore, to ask the cause of my friend's melancholy. I felt sure, in due time, of being made the confidant of the secret, provided no motive of delicacy prompted its concealment.

That evening in my room at the hotel, George told me his story. He had formed an attachment for a young lady, whose graces of mind and person he portrayed with all the fervor of a lover's eloquence. She had returned his affection, but her father had opposed his suit, having set his heart on the marriage of his daughter to a nephew of his.

This nephew was a young physician, of profane character, my friend assured me—but that may have been prejudice—who had long but unsuccessfully wooed his cousin, to whom his profress were as repugnant as to her father they were acceptable.

Some months since, Mr. Parsons, the young lady's father, had gone South on business, accompanied by his nephew. At New Orleans he had been seized by a sudden illness, which terminated fatally in three days.

On the day preceding his death he had executed a will, (which had since been duly proved by the depositions of the attesting witnesses,) containing a solemn request that his daughter, to whom he left the whole of his estate, should accept the hand of his nephew in marriage, coupled with a provision that in case the latter offered, and she refused, within a specified period, to enter into the proposed union, the entire estate devised to his daughter should be forfeited to the nephew.

To sacrifice her fortune to her heart's choice would not have cost Julia Parsons a moment's hesitation; and nothing could have more delighted George Dickson, than so fair an opportunity of showing how superior his devotion was to all considerations of personal advantage. But her father's dying request, in Julia's eyes was sacred. It had surprised and stunned her, it is true, for in their many conferences on the subject, he had never gone beyond the most kindly remonstrance, and had never even hinted at anything like coercion.

Young Parsons had not the magnanimity to forget his ungenerous advantage.

He might have been content with his cousin's fortune alone, but his right to that depended on his offer and her rejection of an alliance which she felt in conscience bound to accept. The brief season of grace, which she had been compelled to beg even with tears, had already almost passed, and a few more days would witness the condemnation of two lives to hopeless misery.

At the conclusion of my friend's narrative, in which, for reasons that may hereafter be developed, I felt a peculiar interest, I prevailed upon him to accompany me to a place of amusement to which I had previously procured tickets.

When we reached the theatre, the performance had already begun; but we succeeded in finding seats which commanded a fair view both of the stage and the audience.

In a few moments George touched my elbow.

"Observe the gentleman nearly opposite, in the front of the parquette, seated next the column, leaning his

arm on his cane," he whispered

I looked in the direction indicated, and saw a face whose striking resemblance to one I had seen before caused me to start with surprise.

"Who is it?" I asked

"Eldridge Parsons," was the reply.

"The nephew of whom you spoke?"

"The same," my friend answered

"Does he resemble his uncle?" I was on the point of inquiring, but just then the stranger drew the glove from his right hand, and I saw that the first joint of the middle finger was wanting, a circumstance which, for sufficient reason, absorbed my attention.

"Do you know the exact date of Mr. Parsons' death?" I asked, when we had gained the street at the close of the performance.

"Yes," said George, "it was the twenty-third of December. His daughter received a telegram from her cousin announcing the fact the same day. But why do you ask?"

"I have a reason which may or may not prove a good one," I returned; and stating that I had business engagements for the whole of the next day I parted with my friend, promising to meet him on the following evening.

Next afternoon found me at the office of Dr. Parsons.

"Dr. Parsons, I presume?" were the words with which I accosted the gentleman I had seen at the theatre.

"Yes, sir."

"You may not remember me, Doctor, but I believe we have met before."

"I beg pardon, sir, for not recollecting the occasion."

"You were in New Orleans last winter, were you not?"

"I was," he answered, with some embarrassment.

"I saw the gentleman on whom you called to draft a will."

He turned pale, but made no reply. Surrogate's office this morning," I resumed, "and—"

"You speak of my uncle's will," he hastily interrupted.

"And yet," I continued, "you said it was your's when you applied to have it written. You represented yourself as desirous of executing such a document preparatory to embarking on a perilous voyage. The paper was drawn in accordance with your instructions, leaving the date to be filled at the time of signing. Your locks were gray then, and you certainly looked old enough to have a marriageable daughter, but your disguise was not perfect," and I pointed to the mutilated finger.

"What do you mean?" he shouted in a defiant tone, springing to his feet.

"Simply that your uncle's signature to that paper is a forgery!" I answered, rising and confronting him. "He died on the twenty-third of December. Your own telegram to that effect is in existence. It was on the twenty-fourth, the day before Christmas, that you called on me to prepare the paper now on record as his will. The inference is plain; you undertook to manufacture this spurious testament after your uncle's death, and wishing to clothe your villainy in legal form, you procured from me the required draft. You, or some one at your instigation, simulated the signature of the deceased. The witnesses, who have since perjured themselves in their depositions, were procured in some manner best known to yourself."

"Enough, sir!" he ejaculated, placing his back against the door; "you having shown yourself in possession of a secret the custody of which may prove dangerous!"

"I am not unprepared for your threat," I replied. "In the first place, I did not come here unarmed; in the next, I have prepared a full written statement of the facts to which I have alluded, with information, besides, of my present visit to yourself. This paper will be delivered to the friend to whom it is directed, unless within an hour I reclaim it from the messenger, who has been instructed for that length of time to retain it."

His face grew livid. His frame quivered with mingled fear and rage, and his eyes gleamed like that of a wild beast at bay.

"What is your purpose?" he exclaimed, in a voice hoarse with suppressed passion.

"To keep your secret while you live," I answered, "on one condition."

"Name it."

"That you write instantly to Julia Parsons, renouncing all pretensions to her hand, and absolutely withdrawing your proposal of marriage."

After a moment's pause he seated himself at his desk, and hastily penned a brief note, which he submitted to my inspection; it was quite satisfactory.

"Be so good as to seal and address it," I said.

He did so.

"I will see that it is delivered," I remarked, taking it up and bowing myself out.

"When I met George Dickson that evening, his old college look had come back. He had great news to tell me.—The next thing was to take me to see Julia, and it is needless to tell what a happy evening we three spent together, and what a happy marriage followed not long after.

Eldridge Parsons, I have just learned, joined one of the late Cuban expeditions, and was killed in a recent encounter with the Spaniards.

Bloody Work in Jackson County, Florida.

The Tallahassee Sentinel furnishes the following account of a bloody affair that occurred at Marianna, Florida.

On Tuesday, the 28th ultimo, the colored people had a picnic some two miles from Marianna. The most prevalent report is that the row commenced among the colored women, most of whom were armed. They fired away, not knowing at whom or for what they were firing. The whole party became panic-stricken, and all who had arms fired away, seemingly without a motive. Another report is that while the colored people were quietly enjoying themselves, they were fired on by some party concealed in the woods, and they then became frightened and fired as stated.

The result of the shooting was that Wyatt Scarlock, colored, who had a child in his arms, was shot dead, the ball passing through the head of the child and entering the breast of Scarlock, killing both instantly. Several other colored people were wounded. It is reported that the colored people swore then that three of the best citizens in Marianna should be killed in retaliation.

On Wednesday evening at Columbus Sullivan, a preacher, who lives some seven or eight miles west Marianna, and a colored man, were returning from the gin house they were fired on. Sullivan was wounded in the shoulder, and has since died. The colored man was wounded in the forehead and will recover. On Friday evening, while the boarders were sitting on the stoop of Mrs. Attaway's after supper, they were fired on by parties supposed to be Calvin Rodgers, colored, and two others, unknown. Miss Maggie McClellan, eldest daughter of Col. McClellan, was instantly killed, three balls or buckshot piercing the region of the heart. Col. McClellan is badly wounded. Mr. Coker and several others were on the stoop at the time. Coker said he recognized the voice of Rodgers giving the command "Fire." Several colored men have been arrested on suspicion. One man swears that Rodgers wanted him to join the party who did the shooting on Friday evening. On Saturday morning Oscar Nichols, who was piloting a party of white men in pursuit of Rodgers, was shot dead by some person concealed in the woods, and a Mr. John Myrick, Jr., was wounded at the same time.

In all there have been five persons killed and several wounded in and near Marianna during the past week.

Great excitement exists. The citizens of all classes and colors are under arms and in pursuit of the murderers. The colored people are very indignant at the cowardly assassination of Miss McClellan, and are doing all in their power to arrest the guilty parties.

An exchange says "He who pelts every barking dog must pick up a great many stones."

Contracts for 1870.

There are no greater legal complications than those which grow out of the relation of landlord and Tenant. The mutual rights, duties and liabilities of the parties, and the remedy for their enforcement when violated, is a fruitful source of strife and litigation. To avoid such difficulties or to ensure a safe and speedy recourse against offenders, we advise our readers to make it an invariable rule to enter into written contracts before witnesses, specifying clearly the terms of the contract. Wherever this is done, either the landlord, tenant or laborer, can have an easy remedy for violations of the contract, under the provisions of an Act to protect laborers and persons working under contract on shares of crops. The 4th section of that Act makes it a criminal offence in either party to the contract, to violate its provisions, by fraudulently disposing of or removing the crop before division, or by refusing to perform the labor or fulfill the conditions of the contract, and punishes the offender by fine or imprisonment on conviction before a competent Court. We regard it one of the best laws for the times, that could be framed, and we want our readers to understand that it relates to and governs written contracts only and them duly witnessed. One half of the difficulties between lessors and lessees result from negligence in making their contracts. After they get into trouble they seek a lawyer and find, if any, there is but a slim remedy. They have no contract, because they each thought the other would act right, and even then each perhaps thinks he is acting fairly, having forgotten or misunderstood the terms of the original agreement. Write your contracts hereafter and have them signed and witnessed in department you will feel yourself more repaid by freedom from any anxiety in the coming settlement.—Keowee Courier.

An enterprise destined to have an important influence in developing the resources of the South is now being pushed to completion. Port Royal, S. C., and Augusta, Ga., 110 miles apart, are to be connected by a railroad, which has been surveyed, contracted for, and partially constructed. The former place contains incomparably the finest harbor on the Southern Atlantic seaboard, which has been suffered to lie too long unemployed and comparatively unknown. Vessels drawing twenty-two feet of water can enter it, and within the ample estuary of Broad River, the united navies of the world might ride at anchor. The projected railroad will, it is anticipated, bring thither no small part of the Southern and South-eastern States, and even of the Pacific coast. It will also become an important cotton mart, having in this respect signal advantages over Charleston, Savannah, and Mobile, whose harbors are closed to vessels of ordinary draught, and therefore scarcely worthy of the name.

The completion of the railroad will witness the foundation of what will probably become a prosperous city, and perhaps the most important port of the South, with the exception of New Orleans. Its site will be not far from the town of Beaufort, and it promises to become a more congenial place of residence for Northern men than most of the Southern towns. Northern capital will build it, as Northern capital is now building the projected railroad which is to connect it with Augusta, and to the same agency the South may yet be indebted for a sea port equal in importance to the great city which Jefferson once anticipated would grow up at Norfolk.

New York Sun.

NEWSPAPER SPONGERS.—An exchange well says that there are many persons who either take no paper at all, or else take one from another city, and when they wish to see what is transpiring in their neighborhood, they borrow the local paper from some citizen more liberal than themselves. Many men of this kind are engaged in business, and frequently grumble because people do not patronize "home industry," when they practice the very thing of which they complain.

Mr. Davis.

Some of the incidents attending the arrival and sojourn of ex-President Jefferson Davis in Baltimore, are striking indications of the interest and love in the hearts of the Southern people, that still follow him who is the impersonation of their "lost cause."

The Southern people know the unselfish fidelity with which Jefferson Davis sustained their sacred cause, and they are justly proud of the unexampled dignity with which he has represented his people, whether as their chosen ruler, their vicarious martyrs, or as an exile in foreign climes. Every courtesy shown Mr. Davis by foreigners has been gratefully noted by the Southern people, every distinction, accorded him, is accepted by the South as an ascription of praise to her own virtues, of which he is the fitting exponent.

Remembering the unflinching, un-murmuring fidelity with which he demeaned himself through that four years' night, and recalling the bitter hatred and unscrupulous mendacity with which he was pursued, who can fail to contrast him with those who were his accusers. Where are the Joe Browns, the Holdens, et id omne genus, the malcontents and marplots of the Confederate struggle for Freedom? Almost to a man in the camp of the enemy. Each one of them a political Lazarus, full of wounds and putrifying sores, shunned and cursed by the people among whom they were born. Meanwhile Mr. Davis already has his reward. Canonized by the voice of his countrymen, he will be known to future generations as the sainted martyr of the South.—Wilmington Star.

THE APPROACHING STATE FAIR.—We hope that our friends of the State press will not fail to keep this matter prominently before their readers. We expect to have a grand gathering here on the occasion of the Fair. We believe that Columbia enters fully into the spirit of the occasion. Her municipal authorities will do their part. The citizens generally will do theirs. Let us have an industrial exhibition that will give the promise of brighter and better times. Let every part of the State do its part. Let every County send its contributions, personal and material. The field to which we invite the good people of the State is not the field of political excitement, but the field of generous and useful rivalry in the line of industrial development. The question is, now, who is doing most service in the cause of agriculture and manufactures, and mechanics, and industry in general. Other States are to have their Fairs, or have had them. Let South Carolina not be found in the rear. Let her join the grand industrial columns of the great army of the country's workers.—She has made her mark in war, and received her blows. Let her now make her mark in peace, and receive its gentle, useful and refreshing fruits. We learn that a ball and a grand tournament are among the incidents to be expected in connection with the Fair in November next. We expect soon to have an abundant supply of the premium lists, now in demand.—Columbia Phoenix.

RAPIDITY OF THOUGHT IN DREAMING.—A very remarkable circumstance, and an important point of analogy is, says Dr. Forbes Winslow, to be found in the extreme rapidity with which the mental operations are performed, or rather with which the material changes on which the ideas depend are excited in the hemispherical ganglia. It would appear as if a whole series of acts that would really occupy a long lapse of time pass ideally through the mind in one instant. We have in dreams no perception of the lapse of time—a strange property of mind; for if such be also its property when entered into the eternal disembodied state, time will appear to us as eternity. The relations of space as well as of time are also annihilated, so that while almost an eternity is compressed into a moment, infinite space is traversed more swiftly than by real thought. There are numerous illustrations of this principle on record. A gentleman dreamt that he had enlisted

as a soldier, joined his regiment, deserted, was apprehended, carried back, tried, condemned to be shot, and at last led out for execution. After the usual preparations a gun was fired; he awoke with the report, and found that a noise in an adjoining room had, at the same moment, produced the dream and awakened him. A friend of Dr. Abernethy dreamt that he had crossed the Atlantic and spent a fortnight in America. In embarking, on his return, he fell into the sea, and awakening in the freight, found that he had not been asleep ten minutes.

A gentleman looking at his watch after mid-night cried: "It's to-morrow morning I must bid you good night!"

Voltaire said of Mademoiselle de Lively: "she was so beautiful that I raised my long, thin body, and stood before her like a point of admiration."

It is said to be quite doubtful whether St. Peter ever opens the door of Heaven in the next world to any one who does much of his praying here with a little "e" in it.

"Mother," said Ike Partington, "did you know that the 'iron horse' had but one ear?" "One ear! merciful gracious, child, what do you mean?" "Why, the engineer, of course."

You flatter yourself that you hold the reins of your own establishment. So you do. But if you are a married man, I'll wager two to one that you'll hold them at the horse end.

"What makes you so grum Tom?" "Oh I have had to endure a sad trial to my feelings." "What on earth was it?" "Why, I had to tie on a pretty girl's bonnet while her ma was looking on."

Some people seem to have been created for the particular enjoyment of scandal. Like swine, they are supremely happy only when they have succeeded in finding a good sized mud-puddle to wallow in.

"Bob," said a young fellow at a fancy fair, "you are missing all the sights on this side." "Never mind, Bill," retorted Bob, "I am sighting all the misses on the other."

"There is no mystery," says Davis, "so impenetrable that envy cannot pierce it with its stealthy glance; and let the veil be woven ever so skillfully, there is always some pin-hole through which we may be seen."

The fashionable wife of our day is a good deal like a mosquito in your room after bed time. You never can tell exactly where it is by its song, and you are ever in an agony of suspense as to where and when its bill is going to be presented.

A gentleman being asked by a clergyman why he did not attend the evening prayer-meeting, said he could not leave the children. "What I have you no servants?" "Yes," he replied, "we have two servants, who keep the house and board us; we are allowed few privileges."

It is true, as Thackeray says, that each separate soul of us is an island in the great ocean of life. But there are boats of sympathy which ply between shore and shore; and to some few it is given to find a fellow isle, willing, nay eager, to build a causeway which shall forever sink the two together.

Josh Billings says: "Mackerel inhabit the sea, generally; but those which inhabit the grocery alius taste to me as though they have been fattened on salt.—They want a deal of freshening before they're eaten, and also afterwards. If I kin have plenty of mackerel for breakfast, I can generally make the other two meals out of water."

Henry Ward Beecher says: "It is a great gift to be born rich in the eyes and ears. Some men have carried before them an endless procession of beauty. There are charms for them where others perceive barrenness. There is a concert in the air all the time for those whose ears are tuned aright. Trees harp for them, winds roll their tones musically, and birds and insects fill up the orchestra."